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C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 03 USNATO 000008

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S/SRAP OFFICE

E.O. 12958: DECL: 01/08/2020
TAGS: PREL MOPS AF MCAP NATO
SUBJECT: ALLIED RESPONSE TO STRENGTHENING CIVILIAN
COORDINATION IN AFGHANISTAN

REF: STATE 132520

Classified By: Political Advisor Kelly Degnan for reasons: 1.4 (b) and (d).

¶1. (U) In response to reftel request for Allied positions on strengthening civilian coordination in Afghanistan, the following reflects recent feedback from Allies. Post will provide updates, if needed, after Afghanistan-related NATO meetings in advance of the January 28 London conference on Afghanistan.

¶2. (C/REL UK) Summary and Comment. Allies support strengthening and better resourcing the United Nations Assistance Mission in Afghanistan (UNAMA) and the UN Special Representative of the Secretary General (SRSG). Allies are unanimous that UNAMA must remain the highest coordinating authority of international civilian assistance. At the same time, they also recognize the need for better coordination of ISAF partners' assistance. Nations want to boost the role of NATO's Senior Civilian Representative (SCR) to develop a strong civilian and political counterpart to the Commander of the International Assistance Force (COMISAF). How willing they are to coordinate national interests with Afghan and ISAF priorities remains unclear. Germany and France have called for clear definitions and roles for an enhanced SCR's office to ensure that national priorities for civilian programs are maintained. All oppose dual-hatting the U.S. Ambassador or giving an American the role of the SCR under an enhanced mandate, however, there is general support for an American as Deputy SCR. The NATO Secretary General (SYG) seeks agreement on the concept to strengthen UNAMA and the NATO SCR's office, as well as identify a SCR candidate, before the January 28 London conference on Afghanistan.

¶3. (C/ REL UK) Summary and Comment cont. As Allied feedback indicates, overcoming resistance to having a robust SCR coordinate ISAF nations' civilian efforts will be the toughest part of selling the concept, despite general agreement that such coordination is needed. The London Conference offers an opportunity for Foreign Ministers to deliver a firm message that all nations (including the U.S.)

must coordinate their efforts with Afghan and ISAF priorities; strengthening UNAMA and SCR will ensure a coherent approach that is essential to the success of our mission. END Summary and Comment.

Canada: Skeptical But Supportive

¶ 14. (C/REL UK) Canadian representatives supported an enhanced NATO SCR office but were concerned that a new SCR mandate might interfere with the national priorities Ottawa had set for civilian activities within its PRT, including programs for sub-national governance, development, and community planning. In Canada's view, harmonization between PRTs was not the most pressing need; instead there was a need for better vertical coordination between individual PRTs in the field and Kabul. Canada preferred utilizing NATO common (civil budget) funding rather than Voluntary National Contributions as a more permanent support mechanism for an enhanced SCR office.

The Netherlands: Development over Defense SCR

¶ 15. (C/REL UK) The Hague representatives supported an enhanced SCR structure that demonstrates closer coordination and transparency with the UN SRSG on ISAF's efforts in governance and development, preferring a candidate for the role to be a

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former Development or Foreign Minister. The Hague noted that any robust SCR structure and terms of reference must lay out clear and distinct roles and responsibilities from the SRSG to avoid "mission creep" into the UN's areas of responsibility. The Dutch also suggested strengthening the Joint Coordination and Monitoring Board (JCMB), possibly in response to SRSG Kai Eide's idea to create an Executive Steering Board in Kabul. They embraced expanding the SCR's office to mimic that of the military chain of command and giving it executive authority to coordinate the PRT's civilian activities. However, the Hague representatives were skeptical the U.S. would submit to the SCR's coordination, but viewed it as an opportunity for the U.S. to lead other nations to accept the expanded SCR structure.

Germany: Expanded SCR Role Definitions

¶ 16. (C/REL UK) While acknowledging the need for improved coordination of civilian efforts, German representatives resisted coordination of all PRT activities by a more operational and empowered SCR. Germany wanted any expanded SCR to have clearly defined roles and responsibilities in regard to PRT reintegration, governance, and anti-corruption activities. Berlin considered many of its PRT activities as separate and distinct from ISAF's "clear, hold, build, and transfer" operations, and viewed many of its civilian contributions as long-term development initiatives that coordinate with and report directly to the UN and the Afghan government.

France: Focused On The Personality

¶ 17. (C/REL UK) In an unexpected show of support, France acknowledged the need to strengthen the coordination of civilian activities in the field, adding that the personalities of a new SCR and SRSG would be the primary concern. Paris preferred a stronger personality as SRSG than as SCR to ensure UNAMA is not undercut politically in Kabul. French representatives also expressed concern about how expanding the SCR's mandate would affect national civilian

activities. Paris was comfortable with the SCR's office coordinating NATO/ISAF related activities, such as reintegration and reconciliation, but hesitant to accept SCR involvement in clinics and schools. France opposed using NATO civilian common funding for the expansion and resourcing of the SCR's office, preferring voluntary national contributions. France supported SRSG Kai Eide's suggestion to create an Executive Steering Group as an impartial and independent coordination authority, inclusive of the SCR and COMISAF, but under the lead of UNAMA and the Afghan government. France rejected the idea of dual-hatting national civilians in the field to also have an ISAF role, stating that Paris's ultimate support depended upon the definition of the SCR's role. France strongly reiterated that UNAMA was the only overarching authority to coordinate civilian activities.

Italy: Preserve National Priorities

¶ 8. (C/REL UK) Italian representatives supported pursuing a Comprehensive NATO Approach but was skeptical of a SCR mandate that gave it the authority to coordinate civilian activities at the PRT field level. Italy supported France's rationale to create a Kabul-based Executive Steering Group to serve as the authority to prioritize and direct civilian activities in the field. Italy cautioned that it already

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experienced turf wars within its capital for the coordination of Italian civilian activities, noting Rome preferred to retain coordination of its national civilian priorities under its PRT. Italy supported NATO endorsing the concept to strengthen civilian coordination before the January 28 conference but preferred that NATO not delve into the details of the SCR's terms of reference or office structure until after the conference.

Spain: Clear Roles Between SRSG and SCR

¶ 9. (C/REL UK) Madrid's representatives supported an expanded SCR structure and said there was a imminent need for clearly defined roles between the SRSG and the SCR without creating an overly bureaucratic structure. Spain was on the fence as whether there was a need to create a parallel civilian chain of command to the existing military structure, but remained open to the idea.

UK And U.S.: On The Same Page

¶ 10. (C/REL UK) The UK viewed the NATO SCR role as clearly defined and distinct from the UN SRSG authority, adding that the SCR should be given increased executive powers to prioritize PRT resources and activities. UK Representatives said that an expanded SCR's office should focus on stabilization vice long-term development, particularly in the south and east where ISAF's counterinsurgency operations are most robust. In the UK view, stabalization is an area of focus not under UNAMA or NGO mandates and an area in which an ISAF civilian representative can have the most impact. The UK said that there is an immediate need for synchronization of civilian and military efforts after an ISAF operation to ensure stabilization activities give immediate effect to Aghans in the area. Unlike the French, UK representatives supported a parallel military and civilian chain of command down to the PRT level. In their view, the parallel structure would ensure NATO/ISAF civilian efforts are properly coordinated and complementary to ISAF's "clear, hold, build, and transfer" operations. The UK mission acknowledged that all nations would have to accept coordination, unlike the current situation under the JCMB's lead.

SYG: A Decision Before London

¶11. (C/REL UK) The SYG wants the NAC to agree on the concept to strengthen the NATO SCR's mandate, and, although no candidates have been officially identified yet, also wants an agreement on the candidate for the enhanced SCR position before the January 28 London conference. In the SYG's view, the candidate must meet the following criteria to be selected for the post:

- Be willing to commit to full time presence in Afghanistan for at least 12 to 18 months, preferably through summer 2011;

- Be a political figure who is action oriented - "we don't need a red-carpet guy; we need someone who can write his own reports."

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